

for improving child care across the Nation. Parents should not have to join the service to receive good child care. High quality, affordable care is a basic necessity for all working families. It is my hope that we will take these lessons to heart and commit to ensuring that all children are given opportunities for the right start in life.

I would like to express my gratitude to Nancy Duff Campbell and Judith Appelbaum of the National Women's Law Center for their hard work on producing this valuable report and I would ask that a summary of the important "lessons learned" from their report be entered into the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

SIX LESSONS LEARNED

First, those seeking to make improvements in civilian child care should not be daunted by the task: the military has shown by its example that it is possible to take a woefully inadequate child care system and dramatically improve it over a relatively short period of time. If even a tradition-bound institution like the military can turn its child care system around, similar progress should be achievable in other settings.

Second, to achieve progress, it is necessary to acknowledge the seriousness of the child care problem and the consequences of inaction. Policy makers in Congress and the Department of Defense acted to reform military child care after extensive Congressional hearings and GAO reports not only exposed the poor state of military child care, but also documented two results: because the child care system was failing to meet the needs of a changing workforce it was jeopardizing workforce performance (and thus military readiness), and it was affecting the welfare of the children. Similar concerns about the unavailability of high-quality, affordable child care across the U.S. today—its impact on workforce performance, and the effects on the healthy development and learning of children—should prompt action to improve civilian child care.

Third, the quality of child care can be improved by focusing on establishing and enforcing comprehensive standards, assisting providers in becoming accredited, and enhancing provider compensation and training. The military has developed comprehensive standards that providers must meet in order to be certified to operate, and it ensures that these standards are met through a system of unannounced inspections and serious sanctions for failure to comply. It also assists providers in meeting the additional requirements necessary to become accredited by a nationally recognized program. It encourages parental involvement through parent boards, an "open door" policy, and an anonymous hotline for reporting problems. And it has increased provider compensation and training, and linked compensation increases to the achievement of training milestones. While some states have taken steps forward in one or more of these areas, on the whole the states have been far less effective in addressing these issues, and could benefit substantially from emulating the military's formula for success.

Fourth, child care affordability should be addressed through a system of subsidies. The military child care system keeps care affordable for parents through the use of a sliding schedule of fees based on parent income, as well as other subsidies. As a result, the average weekly fee paid by military families for

center-based care is significantly lower than the average weekly fee paid by civilian families for such care. In the civilian world, a patchwork array of government measures assists some families in meeting their child care expenses, but these policies are inadequate. Policy makers at both the federal and state levels should follow the military's example in making more resources available—as well as using the mechanisms it has used to distribute these resources—to help subsidize care for families who cannot afford to pay the full cost of good child care.

Fifth, the availability of care should be expanded. Although demand still far exceeds supply in the military system, the military has made significant progress in this regard by continually assessing unmet need and taking steps to address it through a comprehensive approach that includes all kinds of care: child care centers, family child care, and before and after-school programs, as well as resource and referral agencies to assist parents in locating care. Some states and localities have taken a variety of steps to expand the supply of child care, but the military's experience demonstrates, among other things, that it is essential to measure unmet demand and then develop a plan for meeting it with specific goals and timetables.

Sixth, improving the quality, affordability, and availability of child care is a costly proposition, and will succeed only if policy makers commit the resources necessary to get the job done. Through increased Congressional appropriations and allocations from within DoD resources, the funds provided for military child care have been climbing dramatically in recent years, making the turnaround in military child care possible. The same commitment of resources on the civilian side is not yet evident. An increased public investment is critical if the same progress is to be achieved in civilian child care. The military's experience shows, in short, that policy makers can be prodded into action by the acknowledgment of a serious child care problem, and that once they make child care a top priority and allocate the resources that are needed to address it, a seriously deficient system can be turned around. Those faced with the challenge of expanding access to affordable, high-quality child care across the United States today—policy makers, child care administrators, advocates, providers, parents, and others—should find encouragement in this conclusion. Inspired by the military's example, and armed with knowledge of the tools it used to achieve its successes, they need only to apply the lessons learned to make child care for all working families, like the child care provided to military families—to echo the Army's familiar jingle—"be all that it can be."

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to call for Senate action on reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. Earlier this week, the Supreme Court in its decision in *United States versus Morrison* struck a specific provision from the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. But that decision leaves intact the bulk of this landmark law. For the past five years, VAWA has funded and promoted significant innovations in federal, state and local programs to assist victims of violence, enhance prosecution of domestic violence and sexual assault crimes, and prevent violence against

women and children in their homes and on our streets. This support has enabled shelters, rape crisis centers, health care professionals, schools, police forces and communities across the country to address and prevent violence against women. I commend my distinguished colleague from Delaware, Senator BIDEN, for his authorship of the original Violence Against Women Act and for his commitment to ensuring that this important legislation is re-authorized.

Women across the nation, including in my home state of Wisconsin, have benefitted from this important legislation. Women's lives have been saved. Countless victims of domestic violence or sexual assault are receiving the services they need. Police are participating in training programs to arrest and bring abusers to justice. Both men and women are learning about the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault. In short, women are safer today because of this legislation.

Our nation's progress in preventing violence against women, however, is now in serious jeopardy. Authorization for the Violence Against Women Act ends this year. I understand that Senators BIDEN and HATCH have been working closely to craft a compromise re-authorization bill. I commend both of my colleagues for their commitment to this issue. But with only weeks remaining in this abbreviated session, I urge the Senate leadership to take action on this legislation without further delay.

EXPLANATION OF VOTES

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, yesterday, May 17, 2000, I was necessarily absent during rollcall votes 102, 103, and 104 in order to accompany the President of the United States to the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, and to meet with several mayors representing cities in southeastern Connecticut. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: yes on rollcall vote 102; yes on rollcall vote 103; yes on rollcall vote 104.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Wednesday, May 17, 2000, the Federal debt stood at \$5,671,580,132,464.01 (Five trillion, six hundred seventy-one billion, five hundred eighty million, one hundred thirty-two thousand, four hundred sixty-four dollars and one cent).

One year ago, May 17, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,587,730,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred eighty-seven billion, seven hundred thirty million).

Five years ago, May 17, 1995, the Federal debt stood at \$4,884,247,000,000 (Four trillion, eight hundred eighty-four billion, two hundred forty-seven million).

Ten years ago, May 17, 1990, the Federal debt stood at \$3,093,688,000,000